

'If I were called upon, he declares in words which sound like an echo of an often-quoted dictum of Alexander Hamilton's, 'to construct a constitution *a priori* for this country, of which a senate, or superior chamber, was to be a constituent part, I am at a loss to conceive where I could obtain more suitable materials for its construction than in the body of our hereditary peerage.' The tree, his argument runs, shall be known by its fruit. The hereditary peerage has formed an active and powerful branch of our legislature for five centuries, and no statesman can doubt that its peculiar character has mainly contributed to the stability of our institutions. Throughout that period it has given us a senate not inferior in capacity to the elective chamber, and now, as he contends, the hereditary assembly manifestly excels the elective, not only ⁴ in the higher accomplishments of statesmen, in elevation of thought and feeling, in learning and in eloquence,' but also in 'those very qualities, for the possession of which at first sight we should be most disposed to give a House of Commons credit, that mastery of detail and management of complicated commonplaces which we style in this country " business-like habits." '

You cannot, he is careful to observe, obtain a substitute for the House of Lords by merely collecting all the clever men of the country and giving them the august title of a senate. A nation will not allow three hundred men, however ingenious, to make laws for them, just because the sovereign power of the state chooses to appoint that such a number of its subjects shall possess this privilege. ' The King of England may make peers, but he cannot make a House of Lords.'

The order of men, of whom such an assembly is formed, is the creation of ages. In the first place, they must really be an estate of the realm, a class of individuals who from their property and personal influence alone form an important section of the whole nation. . . . Their names, office, and character, and the ennobling achievements of their order, must be blended with our history and bound up with our hereditary sentiment. They must be felt and recognised